

Washington, DC – Congressman Mike Honda (D-CA), Chairman of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), today released the following statement regarding President Bush’s nomination of Judge Samuel Alito to the United States Supreme Court:

“Today’s nomination of Judge Samuel Alito to replace Justice O’Connor is a missed opportunity for President Bush and for our country. I had hoped that the President would choose a nominee with a commitment to protecting our rights and freedoms, but it appears that he has bowed to the far right. President Bush could have shown leadership by uniting all Americans behind a consensus nominee who, like mainstream conservative Justice O’Connor, cherished the rights of all Americans, including the rights of minorities and vulnerable populations.

Instead, the President has nominated a judge who will divide the U. S. Senate and the American people. Now, I urge our Senators to truly examine all aspects of the nominee’s record and make an independent judgment.

The critical issues at stake for the Asian and Pacific Islander Community include:
equal justice and right of access to the courts;

- support for Congress’ constitutional authority to pass civil rights legislation;
- support for Supreme Court precedent including the landmark Roe v. Wade decision;
and
- protection of immigrant rights, and voting rights.

Judge Alito’s record on these issues must be closely scrutinized. His legal opinions reveal that he sought to:

- Undermine the Family and Medical Leave Act;
- Make it more difficult for victims of racial and gender discrimination to prove their cases;
- Uphold a State of Pennsylvania law requiring women in certain circumstances to notify the husband before an abortion; and

- Restrict the Federal government's laws against possession of machine guns at gun shows.

All of these issues are at risk if Justice O'Connor is to be replaced with a nominee such as Judge Alito, who has a record of ideological activism against the rights we have fought so long and hard to attain."